

MAYOR SHAYNE R. GALLO—STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS 2013

I am proud to say Kingston's on the move. In the 2012 State of the City, I explained how we are all stakeholders who have a substantial investment in our city. However, in order for our city to actualize itself as a model city, there must be a public/private partnership made of stakeholders such as: residents, businesses, professionals, seniors, children, veterans, clergy and faith-based community leaders, not-for-profits, volunteer groups, schools, citizen groups and our county, state and federal representatives, so that our city through this partnership may obtain a maximum return for all our stakeholders' investments in the city. We all got a piece.

In 2012, I referred to Kingston as a "model city". I said that in order for us to succeed as a "model city" we must change the culture within our city government. I said we must also address Quality of Life concerns of our stakeholders that have thwarted our city's growth and economic development for too long.

I vowed to restructure and reinvent, where necessary, our government to be transparent, accountable, accessible for all stakeholders; and to ensure our government acts on behalf of the public interest, not the select few in the culture of entitlement prevalent for many years which impeded our city from developing.

Simply put, we are now managing our government as a business, and similar to all our stakeholders as they would manage their households. Our city government is now accessible, and —fair— for all stakeholders. I'm telling you... with your help, Kingston is on the move.

Thus, restructuring of our government over the past year has been reinvented—there is a more efficient use of stakeholders' tax dollars to address the daunting, and at times, very complex Quality of Life issues festering in our city so we can attract new residents, successful businesses, professionals and tourists to our community.

For our city to become that model city it can only occur if there is a partnership with all the stakeholders in our community. Kingston needs to see all you in this partnership. We can only continue on our community path to success if we include everyone.

BUDGET

While preparing our 2013 Budget, my administration implemented a transparent, fiscally responsible modified, zero-based budget for all city departments. The following factors were considered during the preparation of the 2013 budget.

- A. \$1M deficit due to prior administration's allocation from the city's fund balance.
- B. 2% tax cap with every 1% tax increase equivalent to \$150,000 in spending.
- C. Unfunded mandates such as Safety Net, health and pension personnel costs, Medicare Part B reimbursements, the former City Laboratory retirees and laid-off employees from prior to its closure.
- D. Overall personnel costs at \$.76 of every tax dollar spent.
- E. Solid waste tipping fees.
- F. Operational policy procedure for such items as time and attendance, overtime, compensation time and the use of city vehicles, equipment, cell phones and consultants.
- G. Consolidation of Services—Ulster County 911 and Kingston Fire Department communication dispatch, with assistance from County Executive Mike Hein, Ulster County. Tourism consolidation with Ulster County again with my friend County Executive Mike Hein's assistance.
- H. Opportunity to increase budget revenue through expanding our commercial sales tax respectively and by pursuing federal, state and private foundation monies as well as funding from the private sector.
- I. City bond rate and review of refinancing of the city's long term debt service.

Despite increasing fiscal pressures, a struggling economy, continued unfunded mandates from the state, hospital's closing, school closings, sink holes, fire department scandal... the 2013 Budget adopted by the City Council kept property taxes under New York State's 2% property tax cap increased budget revenues, resulted in savings from our city bonding and actually *improved* our bond rate. This was achieved while still maintaining existing services and addressing Quality of Life and infrastructure for our community. How did we do it?

- With help, from you, our city's stakeholders. What did we do?

- \$85,000 savings in personnel costs from Kingston Fire Department.
- Tourism Consolidation saved us \$20,000 and the continued agreement with Ulster County 911 and Kingston Fire Department brought a savings in personnel costs.
- In 2013, the consolidation of the City Registrar with City Clerk resulting in savings of \$30,000 per year.
- The savings from the City Lab health plan approximately over \$100,000—with a caveat that this is in litigation and the outcome from this and final savings has yet to be determined.
- The city has also found savings from Operational, procedural and internal controls for time and attendance, overtime and compensation time, and for other personnel-related matters such as use of city vehicles, cell phones, equipment. This resulted in a savings for each department's capital equipment budget thereby reducing the city's debt service.
- The city has saved tax dollars from refinancing of its bonds for Capital Improvement.
- In 2012 we assembled transparent internal controls for time and attendance, overtime, compensation time to help prevent fraud, abuse, wasteful spending. We need that money to transform the city.
- Savings from fixed tipping fees for solid waste disposal from Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency. The agreement also affords Kingston to continue single-stream recycling which helps to cover our cost of disposal and eventually the city can market the city's recyclables to further offset our tipping fees.

Since the 2013 budget, additional cost reductions have continued through restructuring of City Registrar while still looking into more alternatives for savings from employee health and dental plans. It is imperative for the city, its stakeholders, our public employees and their union representatives to work together. None the less, to ensure we are spending stakeholder tax dollars wisely, we must have a long term financial plan coupled with the transparent, internal accounting controls for managing and spending our tax dollars for the public good. City Comptroller John Tuey is working on that long term plan when we prepare our budget.

In 2013 we must petition the New York State Legislators and all demand mandate relief from health and pension costs, NYSDOT and NYSDEC costs from infrastructure, repairs and economic development. Also we should continue to consolidate and share services when feasible and cost-effective with the County of Ulster and surrounding towns, like the town of Ulster. We must negotiate union contracts that are in the best interest of all stakeholders, resulting in saving of tax dollars.

PUBLIC SAFETY

An ideal city means that everyone is safe. We must reconnect all of our neighborhoods into One Great Neighborhood. One Great Community.

I am so proud of our Kingston Police Department for serving and protecting the public, and for their role in making this city a better place to live. Under the direction of Chief Tinti, the personnel, equipment and technological resources have been allocated and reallocated for:

- Foot patrols
- Bike patrols
- Youth Bureau
- Special assignments
- Special Investigations Unit
- Community policing
- Operation Clean-Sweep and Operation Dust-Pan

All accomplished without spending any additional taxpayer dollars. Moreover, that department has generated a new community spirit and positive moral. A true *Esprit de Corps*.

Community policing makes Kingston a better place to be. It makes Kingston a place you want to live, to work, and play.

We will continue to make Kingston safer for everyone. Chief Tinti will continue to review departmental operational and procedures, keep current with technology and social media, and partner with Ulster County Sheriff Paul VanBlarcum, New York State Police and departments in surrounding towns such as Town of Ulster.

In 2013 the Kingston Loan Development Corporation took title of the Bank of America on Broadway and parcel for the site of a proposed midtown police station. The KLDC and Office of Community Development shall arrange for funding this project. Kingston is on the move! The City's Office of Economic Development and Strategic Partnership shall seek any available state, federal and foundation funds for the conversion of the building and site into a police station and to offset federal funds for the project.

Fire Chief John Reinhardt has restored integrity and credibility. Like Chief Tinti, he too has rallied the troops and created a positive energy in the department. The dedication and professional service of those men and women is to be commended. Thank you all! Let's also recognize the continued need for volunteer firemen, volunteers and citizen groups like Neighborhood Watch.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Since I was sworn-in, I have partnered with multiple entities in our city to pursue several initiatives to take on blight, nuisance. Staying on this ensures we don't push away good residents and businesses and hinder our own growth.

- ✓ Code enforcement.
- ✓ Quality of life task force.
- ✓ Added personnel to Building Safety Division code enforcement without any effect on the city tax rate.
- ✓ Zoning Officer enforcement.
- ✓ Better coordination between Building Safety, Planning, Zoning and Heritage Commission, Assessor's Office.
- ✓ Block by Block enforcement
- ✓ Beautification Task Force
- ✓ Council Adoption of Tenants Accountability Act, Parental Accountability Act and Unsafe Dilapidated Building Codes.

2013:

- A. Restructure Building and Safety Division
- B. Have a full-time Code Enforcement Officer for midtown code enforcement only, paid for by Community Development funding
- C. Increase block-by-block enforcement
- D. Step-up enforcement of unsafe-dilapidated buildings

**PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUING IN 2013....**

- Funding for Everette Hodge Center
- Capital Improvement project for facilities, infrastructure, playground equipment, bathrooms—all funded by HUD.
- Installation of playground equipment and basketball courts at Colonial Gardens
- Music in the Parks
- Movies Under the Stars
- Intergenerational senior/child programs
- Rondout Area fishing pier
- Restore Rondout Center to all-year round programming
- Senior Advisory Council
- Senior Adopt a Grandparent program
- Senior Food Pantry with the Reverend Darlene Kelly of Clinton Avenue Methodist Church
- Senior BBQ
- Annual Senior dinner funded by Ulster County Community Action and the Bruderhoff Church Communities
- Art Bridge

PUBLIC WORKS

- Solid waste, recycling, snow removal
- Infrastructure –sinkholes, sewers and roads

And thank you to Superintendent Mike Schupp and the rest of Board of Public Works for doing more for less in these difficult times. The city and I appreciate those efforts.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To foster economic development we must count our assets and harness the energy of our homegrown talents. We must keep chipping away at Quality of Life concerns we hear from our residents and businesses.

In 2012, we restructured the Office of Economic Development which resulted in administrative savings and we received over \$2.5M in federal and state grant funding for the Washington Avenue sinkhole, AVR Walkway Promenade and safety equipment for Kingston Fire Department.

2013 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- Request for Proposals for the uptown parking garage and Kings Inn site
- Midtown Revitalization – KLDC/ Community Development/Office of Economic Development Strategic Partnership
 - A. First-time homebuyer
 - B. Rehabilitation RUPCO
 - C. Infrastructure—sidewalks and streetscape
 - D. Exterior façade funding
 - E. Beautification
 - F. Police station – Bank of America
 - G. Hire full-time code enforcement officer
 - H. Block-by-Block enforcement
 - I. Hodge Center/Boys and Girls Club
 - J. Youth Bureau
 - K. Kingston Library
 - L. Farmer’s Market

EDUCATIONAL CORRIDOR/GOVERNMENT EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

- County Executive Mike Hein STRIVE, Don Katt, President of Ulster Community College, Kingston Superintendent Paul Padalino and BOCES Superintendent Dr. Chuck Khoury.

- STAVO/Wolftec Manufacturing project is an example of a partnership with Mike Hein, UCDC, IDA, Kingston School District and Town of Ulster Supervisor James Quigley.
- Golden Hill project partnership with County Executive Mike Hein.
- Trolley rail refurbishments
- Clearwater Barn
- AVR Walkway Promenade
- Rail Trails—Partnering with Kingston Land Trust for Strand Trail and with County Executive Mike Hein for Washington Avenue to Hurley and Ashokan Reservoir and with Town of Rosendale to connect to South Wall Street in our City.

ARTS AND CULTURE

Kingston Arts Advisory Board

- A. Biennial sculpture exhibit
- B. Art festival
- C. Art museum and culture center

TOURISM

- Event planning
- Visitors Guide
- Marketing Kingston/partnership with Ulster County
- Cultural Tourism—A partnership with Bard College to:
 - A. Provide curator for Artist Society Kingston biennial sculpture exhibit
 - B. Will assist with a feasibility study of establishing an Art Museum or Cultural Center
 - C. Provide a representative for Kingston Arts Advisory Board
- Partnership with Bard College for educational initiatives in art, math, science and engineering

- Comprehensive plan
- Watershed management plan
- Sea level task force
- Climate Action Task Force

I am proud to say I believe your investment in our City is paying off. I am proud to be the Mayor of our City, the State's first Capital and an important part of our State's development and heritage!

I am proud to save our City's stakeholders, a City which is one of the most unique cities in our State. A City having a diverse population, architecture, beautiful waterfront with deep water port, its historical heritage, a lunch bucket manufacturing background which contributed to the growth of our State.

I am proud that our City is attracting artists, musicians, digital entrepreneurs and tourists making our City a destination for cultural, business, recreational and sports activities.

I am proud Kingston is on the move in attracting all of these people who, after coming to our City, decide to make Kingston the City where they live, work and play. The individuality of our City gives us a sense of pride, cultural awareness and place, all necessary for sustaining our community.

Our City has the potential and now the opportunity to continue to progress, to continue to pay all our stakeholders a positive return on their investment.

We must continue to all partner to move Kingston forward. I am proud the stakeholders have given me the opportunity to partner with all of you.

However, all of you must recognize we cannot continue to move our City forward on our proposed economic development and quality of life issues if our U.S. Congress persists at practicing being a "Do Nothing But Blame and Politicize Legislative Body." In addition, our President, the leader of my party must demonstrate leadership to partner with our Congress to resolve the financial quagmire our nation now finds itself in. Unless this occurs, our City is in danger of not succeeding to be a model city.

Thank you to all the stakeholders for this opportunity to be your partner for our City's success! Thank you to the City Council, department heads, all our hard-working public employees,

County Executive Mike Hein, Town of Ulster Supervisor James Quigley, Congressman Chris Gibson, Assemblyman Kevin Cahill and City of Kingston's Legislator Jeanette Provenzano.
